

1

Friends

The old word is dead.

The old books are dead.

Our speech with holes like worn-out shoes is dead.

Dead is the mind that led to defeat.

2

Our poetry has gone sour.

Women's hair, nights, curtains and sofas

Have gone sour.

Everything has gone sour.

3

My grieved country,

In a flash

You changed me from a poet who wrote love poems

To a poet who writes with a knife

4

What we feel is beyond words:

We should be ashamed of our poems.

5

Stirred by Oriental bombast,

By boastful swaggering that never killed a fly,

By the fiddle and the drum,

We went to war,

And lost.

6

Our shouting is louder than our actions,

Our swords are taller than us,

This is our tragedy.

7

In short

We wear the cape of civilisation

But our souls live in the stone age

8

You don't win a war

With a reed and a flute.

9

Our impatience
Cost us fifty thousand new tents.

10

Dont curse heaven
If it abandons you,
Dont curse circumstances,
God gives victory to whom He wishes
God is not a blacksmith to beat swords.

11

It's painful to listen to the news in the morning
It's painful to listen to the barking of dogs.

12

Our enemies did not cross our borders
They crept through our weaknesses like ants.

13

Five thousand years
Growing beards
In our caves.
Our currency is unknown,
Our eyes are a haven for flies.
Friends,
Smash the doors,
Wash your brains,
Wash your clothes.
Friends,
Read a book,
Write a book,
Grow words, pomegranates and grapes,
Sail to the country of fog and snow.
Nobody knows you exist in caves.
People take you for a breed of mongrels.

14

We are a thick-skinned people
With empty souls.
We spend our days practicing witchcraft,
Playing chess and sleeping.
Are we the 'Nation by which God blessed mankind'?

15

Our desert oil could have become
Daggers of flame and fire.
We're a disgrace to our noble ancestors:
We let our oil flow through the toes of whores.

16

We run wildly through the streets
Dragging people with ropes,
Smashing windows and locks.
We praise like frogs,
Turn midgets into heroes,
And heroes into scum:
We never stop and think.
In mosques
We crouch idly,
Write poems,
Proverbs,
Beg God for victory
Over our enemy

17

If i knew I'd come to no harm,
And could see the Sultan,
This is what i would say:
'Sultan,
Your wild dogs have torn my clothes
Your spies hound me
Their eyes hound me
Their noses hound me
Their feet hound me
They hound me like Fate
Interrogate my wife
And take down the name of my friends.
Sultan,
When I came close to your walls
and talked about my pains,
Your soldiers beat me with their boots,
Forced me to eat my shoes.
Sultan,
You lost two wars,
Sultan,
Half of our people are without tongues,
What's the use of a poeple without tongues?

Half of our people
Are trapped like ants and rats
Between walls.'
If i knew I'd come to no harm
I'd tell him:
'You lost two wars
You lost touch with children.'

18
If we hadn't buried our unity
If we hadn't ripped its young body with bayonets
If it had stayed in our eyes
The dogs wouldn't have savaged our flesh.

19
We do not want an angry generation
To plough the sky
To blow up history
To blow up our thoughts.
We want a new generation
That does not forgive mistakes
That does not bend.
We want a generation of giants.

20
Arab children,
Corn ears of the future,
You will break our chains,
Kill the opium in our heads,
Kill the illusions.
Arab children,
Don't read about our suffocated generation,
We are a hopeless case.
We are as worthless as a water-melon rind.
Dont read about us,
Dont ape us,
Dont accept us,
Dont accept our ideas,
We are a nation of crooks and jugglers.
Arab children,
Spring rain,
Corn ears of the future,
You are the generation
That will overcome defeat.